

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 7, 8, 10 to 17, and 20 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Please amend Claims 1, 6, and 19 as shown below.

1. (Currently Amended) ~~An annealing method of annealing~~ A method for manufacturing an SOI substrate having an HF defect density not more than 0.05 defects / cm², comprising the steps of:

preparing an SOI substrate; and

holding the SOI substrate in a reducing atmosphere containing hydrogen by a holding portion having a surface formed from silicon and annealing the SOI substrate,

wherein the holding portion is a member having a silicon film thereon or a member formed from single-crystal silicon or polysilicon.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the annealing is executed at a temperature lower than a melting point of single-crystal silicon.

3. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein the annealing is executed at a temperature not less than 775°C.

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein the annealing is executed at a temperature not less than 966°C.

5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein the annealing is executed at a temperature not less than 993°C.

6. (Currently Amended) An SOI substrate manufactured using an annealing the method of claim 1.

7. to 18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor device manufacturing method, comprising the steps of:

(a) preparing an SOI substrate manufactured using an annealing the method of claim 1; and

(b) forming an active region for a transistor in a semiconductor layer of the SOI substrate prepared in step (a).

20. (Cancelled)